POCAHONTAS COUNTY

Juanita S. Dilley
Clover Lick, W. Va.
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DROOP MOUNTAIN M.P. CHURCH

This old church is located at the base of Droop Mountain, a few miles south of Hillsboro.

The Droop Mountain society was organized by Dr. George Brown in 1842. Dr. Brown was president of the Pittsburg conference, and was making an official visit to this circuit when he organized the society. Rev. Richard Walker was the pastor, and had been preaching in a private home near where the church stands. David Cochran and wife, Solomon Cochran and wife, Martha McKeever, Elizabeth Hoover, and John McLaughlin were charter members. The church was built under the pastorate of Rev. W.W.Blake in 1858. It is a plain frame structure, having a gallery extending across the rear, in which the colored people sat during the services. The lumber in the building was all "hand-worked." The pulpit is built in across the platform.

Dr. George Nestor was pastor here in 1845----his second year in the conference, and lived in this community. He says of his pastorate here: " The first year we lived in a room in the second story of old mother Elizabeth Morrison's home. This home had been the preaching place of Bishop Asbury and Joshua Soule, who traveled here before he was made a Bishop. Mother Morrison in 1845, was a pious and intelligent widow lady 84 years of age. She with her husband Andrew Morrison then living, Rev. A. T. Morrison a son of hers, Richard Williams and Thankful his wife, (son-in-law and daughter)

and Moses Perkins were among the first reformers in that region. Notwithstanding the strong ties the Morrison families had to the M. E. Church, they left and became forerunners and original members of the Methodist Protestant Church."

Methodistism is as old in this valley as any place in America, and seventy years ago the Methodist Protestant Church was the leading denomination here. But it makes one feel like we emagine the ancient Jews felt after the return from Babylon, when he looked upon the shadows of a departed glory.

The Rev. George W. Barrett was a native of this community. His wife's brother, Jesse Barrett, was a member of old Droop Church. George Brown Cochran, born in 1842, was named for Dr. George Brown who organized the Droop society. Dr. A. L. McKeever was named for Rev. Alfred Lister who was pastor here in 1843.

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I have found but very little additional information about this old Droop Mountain church. It is on the old Droop Mountain road that goes down through the Beard and Denmar communities. A new roof was recently put on the church by Clara and Georgia Beard, and it is in very good repair except that the foundation is not so good and several windows are broken out. The cemetery, which is in the church yard, is much better kept than most rural cemeterys. The grass had been mowed and it looked as if every grave had a stone, some of them old hand made stones dating back almost one hundred years. Some of the people of the community said that they had taken up a collection and paid a man to keep the church yard and cemetery clean. Denny Callison said one-third of this money.

The building itself was made from white pine lumber and was never painted.

There has been no regular pastor for the last ten years, and meetings are held only occasionaly by evangelists. The last meeting (1940) was held by ministers from the denomination " The Church of God". There is no Sunday School at the present time. It is just another one of our abandoned churches. Since it is one of our old historic churches I would like to be able to get more of its history, but the old records cannot be found, and I have not found anyone who can tell me very much. Perhaps later I will run across something more.

Mrs. Rella Yeager of Hillsboro, tells me that she can remember when this church was at the height of its glory and that there was much interest and a large membership. Presidential Meetings were often held in this church and every one for many miles attended. Hundreds of people would be there.

Some of the members as they were remembered by Winters Cochran were David Cochran, Clark Cochran, George Cochran, Hannah Cochran, Ida Cochran, Agnes Cochran, Susan Cochran, Clara Cochran, Sally Underwood, Gabriel Underwood, Biddie Underwood, Henry Perry and wife.

In the home of the Cochrans is an old Bible which belonged to Elizabeth James, one of the old members of this church. On the fly leaf of the Bible was written, Elizabeth James, born March 25, 1803. The Bible was published in 1812, a Stereotype Edition published by the Bible Society at Philadelphia. This old Bible is yellow with age, but very good care had been taken of it.

An old Sunday School record shows that the last Sunday School was in 1934, and it shows an enrollment of thirty.